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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9385
INFO RUEHXK/ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS PRIORITY

UNCLAS JERUSALEM 002198

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE, NEA/IPA FOR
GOLDBERGER/SHAMPAINE/BELGRADE; NSC FOR ABRAMS/SINGH/WATERS;
TREASURY FOR HARRIS/LOEFFLER/NUGENT/HIRSON; BRUSSELS FOR
LERNER

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PREF ECON EAID PREL IS KWBG PHUM
SUBJECT: UN AGENCIES SEE CONTINUED TIGHTENING IN GAZA AND
WEST BANK

REF: JERUSALEM 2101

¶1. (SBU) Summary. UN agencies reported to donors in Jerusalem on October 18 that the humanitarian and access and movement situation in the West Bank and Gaza continues to deteriorate. UNSCO said that GOI officials had confirmed reports that Gaza's Sufa crossing would soon close indefinitely, further restricting capacity to import supplies. OCHA said road obstacles in the West Bank have increased and disputed reports that the MoD has removed 24 barriers. UNSCO calculates that the separation barrier, if constructed according to latest plans, would result in 12 percent of West Bank territory and 80,000-90,000 Palestinians in the "seam zone" between the barrier and Green Line. End summary.

Gaza Update: Sufa To Close

¶2. (SBU) UNSCO Acting Head Lynn Hastings said that GOI Coordinator for Government Affairs in the Territories (COGAT) General Mishlev confirmed in an October 15 meeting that Sufa crossing would soon close indefinitely, leaving only one crossing - Kerem Shalom - open for the transport of humanitarian supplies into Gaza. Kerem Shalom does not have the capacity, she said, to process the 170 truckloads of goods per day required to meet the needs of 1.5 million Palestinians in Gaza. With only two days of meat and three days of milk stockpiled in Gaza, supplies are well below the WFP-recommended stockpiling minimum of 30 days. Non-food items, such as thread, cloth, and paper, are not being permitted into Gaza. UNRWA reports that its request to import paper to print textbooks for the next school semester was denied in writing. Hastings also noted that only five patients per day on average leave Gaza for medical treatment, compared with fifty patients per day in June.

West Bank Update: Longer Barrier, More Obstacles

¶3. (SBU) Acting Head of OCHA Gwyn Lewis said GOI plans would leave about 12% of West Bank territory in the "seam zone" between the barrier and Green Line. She estimated that 80,000-90,000 Palestinians will be caught in the seam zone as the barrier is completed.

¶4. (SBU) Lewis said OCHA's recent comprehensive resurvey of West Bank road obstacles showed a total of 563, a net increase of 31 over the prior tally dated end-July. When

asked, she disputed unconfirmed reports that the IDF had removed 24 obstacles. Lewis said the IDF agrees that all objects included in OCHA's count exist, but disputes whether all should be labeled "obstacles." She said the IDF has told OCHA the obstacles will not be removed, but that more bypasses, link roads, and tunnels will be constructed for Palestinians to facilitate movement. Lewis concluded that the obstacles "look to become a permanent regime."

Transition on Checkpoints "Confusing"

¶15. (SBU) Lewis told Refcoord in an aside that the transition of responsibility for West Bank checkpoints and terminals along the barrier from the IDF to private contractors is creating significant confusion on the ground. The UN's coordinated effort to push back on impending GOI policies that would further restrict the movement of UN staff and supplies in the West Bank is making little progress because of the various GOI actors involved, she said. Both OCHA and UNSCO appealed to donors to support their effort to forestall these additional GOI restrictions.

WALLES